



City of Seattle

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Seattle Freight Advisory Board

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The Seattle Freight Advisory Board shall advise the City Council, the Mayor, and all departments and offices of the City in development of a functional and efficient freight system and on all matters related to freight and the impact that actions by the City may have upon the freight environment.

City Council Resolution
31243

Seattle Freight Advisory Board Meeting Minutes

Date/Time: November 15, 2011 / 9:30 a.m.

Location: Seattle City Hall, L280

Members Present: Warren Aakervik, Linda Anderson, Alon Bassok, Bari Bookout, Mike Sheehan, Cameron Williams

Guests Present: Neal Komedal (Seattle Bicycle Advisory Board), Jim Tutton (WTA), Thomas Noyes (WSDOT), Jodie Vice (CleanScapes), Christine Wolf (Port of Seattle), Eugene Wasserman (NSIA), Dan Graynski (Fehr & Peers)

City Staff Present: Charles Bookman, Tracy Krawczyk, Cristina VanValkenburgh, Tony Mazzella, Allison Schwartz, Goran Sparrman, Kevin O'Neill, Ruth Harper (all SDOT), Gordon Clowers (DPD) Rebecca Deehr (Mayor's Office)

1. Welcome and Introductions

Board members, city staff, and other attendees introduced themselves.

2. Public Comment

Warren Aakervik brought up the failed \$60 car-tab initiative, and wondered how a Freight Master Plan could now be funded. (See Chair's Report below for the response.)

3. Approval of Minutes

The September minutes were approved. The approval of the October minutes will be done by e-mail.

4. Chair's Report and Announcements

Alon Bassok chaired the meeting in Anne Goodchild's absence. He asked Charlie Bookman to speak about the failed \$60 car-tab initiative, in terms of impacts for a Freight Master Plan (FMP). Charlie stated that since funding for the FMP was included with the \$60 car-tab initiative, SDOT now has to figure out what's next. SDOT has some money that could potentially be used for some initial "building block" pieces of a plan, such as updating the network of freight routes. Charlie committed to the Board that SDOT would come back at the January meeting with more information, and also asked the board to think about what pieces of a plan are important to them. Alon stated that at the January 2012 meeting, the Board should also discuss what things they would like done in 2012.

It was noted that the Council specifically made a budget amendment to fund the bicycle master plan update. Linda Anderson wondered what the Freight Board could have done

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to get the Council to set funds aside for a Freight Master Plan. Neal Komedal from the Bicycle Advisory Board stated that the bike board routinely lobbies the Council.

Linda A. also brought up the Connecting Washington Task Force. They are meeting through this month, and are framing the “last mile for freight.” Linda suggested that the FAB needs to “think outside the box,” and could consider a letter to Connecting Washington, asking to combine funding for a freight plan with other issues that need funding. In St. Louis, transportation and housing were jointly funded. The Connecting Washington Task Force is still looking at revenues, and it is not too late to weigh in about funding for freight. Linda is happy to do lobbying on behalf of the FAB. Tom Noyes noted that Seattle Councilmember Tom Rasmussen is on the Connecting Washington task force. Also, Tom Noyes will take thoughts back to Barbara Ivanov, who is leading WSDOT’s freight plan.

Christine Wolf noted that the Port of Tacoma and WSDOT jointly funded the Tide Flats Area Transportation Study.

5. Transit Master Plan

Tony Mazzella of SDOT began the presentation of the draft Transit Master Plan (TMP). SDOT will be going back to the City Council with a final plan in the first quarter of 2012. Currently they are gathering comments, and he encouraged the Board to provide comments.

The goals of the Transit Master Plan are to:

- Make riding transit easier and more desirable, to bring more people to transit for more types of trips
- Create a system that responds to everyone’s needs, especially those who rely on transit most
- Create great places where modes connect to integrate the pedestrian, bicycle, and transit networks
- Use transit as a tool to meet sustainability, growth management, and economic development goals
- Balance system implementation with fiscal, operational, and policy constraints

The Mayor and the Council want to know where the City can make priority transit investments within the existing right-of-way. The TMP recommends a corridor approach and details specific improvements on 15 transit corridors that would improve speed and reliability. Tony encouraged the board to comment on how freight would be affected by these recommendations.

The plan also includes a discussion of Center City rail options. More analysis is needed and much more funding would also be needed. Allison Schwartz of SDOT described the Facility Design Guideline recommendations that SDOT will consider as mobility corridors are designed. Corridor projects are being approached with all transportation modes considered. Transit can get more cars off the road, which in turn is better for freight.

The presentation can be found on: <http://seattle.gov/sfab/documents.htm>. The Transit Master Plan website is located at <http://www.seattle.gov/transportation/transitmasterplan.htm>.

Comments from the Board included:

- Buses need to go at least as fast as cars.
- The transit systems must be equitable.
- Please mention the word “freight” somewhere in the goals, within the network.
- Streetcars are not really faster than BRT/buses, and if there are collisions they will tie up traffic.
- Were major truck streets evaluated? A: Yes.
- How did SDOT coordinate with Metro? A: A technical advisory committee had representatives from both Metro and Sound Transit. In addition, there were separate meetings with Metro. This Plan assumes a large investment by the City of Seattle.

A board member requested a map overlaying the Major Truck Streets and the Transit Master Plan corridors. That was not available at the meeting, but has been posted to the Freight Board’s website at: <http://www.seattle.gov/sfab/documents.htm>.

A board member asked if there will be bus bulbs on freight routes and how potential conflicts with freight mobility might be addressed. Allison and Tony followed up after the meeting with this additional information:

“The Transit Master Plan identifies 16 priority transit corridors including 4 corridors that by 2030 will warrant High Capacity Transit modes, which mostly likely would include surface rail or bus rapid transit (BRT). Several of these corridors overlap with Major Truck Streets. Therefore, careful traffic engineering and design choices will need to be made to ensure that both freight mobility and transit speed and reliability objectives are met. Metro and SDOT have experience in making balanced decisions in this area. Recent examples of this include the West Seattle and 15th Avenue/Elliott Avenue NW RapidRide projects, which were modified significantly during the design process in ways that minimize negative impacts on freight movements.”

There was a question from the audience regarding how much outreach had been done to freight groups. Tony stated that outreach had been done to this group only. Tony felt that this level of outreach is sufficient for planning purposes, but he is willing to come out to other freight groups to present the plan. There will also be further outreach once there are specific projects proposed.

6. Board Member Presentation

Bari Bookout from the Port of Seattle gave the Board Member presentation, which can be found here: <http://seattle.gov/sfab/documents.htm>.

The presentation covered the Port’s organizational structure, its lines of business, and showed its economic impact to the region. There are four major terminals, two of

which have on-dock rail. The Kent Valley has the highest concentration of warehouses in the region, and there are three southerly freight routes heading out of the Port to get to those warehouses.

Seventy percent of cargo moves inland, and there is intense competition for this cargo from other ports. Another major challenge is that ships are getting bigger, and can hold more and more containers. The Port of Seattle has invested \$1.9 billion in terminal infrastructure since the 1990s. There have been many technological improvements for terminal efficiency. The Port also contributes to road and rail infrastructure projects in the region to ensure continued freight mobility. The Port of Seattle has the lowest carbon footprint for cargo shipped by sea from Asia to major markets in the Midwest and the East Coast.

Charlie Bookman noted that the Port activities can be affected by projects or traffic on city streets, and traffic on city streets can be affected by Port activities. How does the Port manage these? A: There are lots of regular coordination meetings, and also feedback from customers. For example, the viaduct 9-day closure was a success in terms of coordination and communication.

Other questions:

- How is the Port doing with its competition? A: The Port is holding on, but losing some business. The Panama Canal is getting widened and that threatens Seattle.
- Is there a time savings for Asian customers to ship through Canada? A: There might be a day savings to ship to Prince Rupert (in Northern British Columbia), but then more distance for rail travel from Prince Rupert. Also, there are no local cargo opportunities for Prince Rupert, while Seattle has local cargo as well as through traffic.

7. Road Safety Summit

Rebecca Deehr from the Mayor's Office described the current Road Safety Summit effort, and specifically requested feedback from the Freight Board. All were encouraged to go online and provide input. Comments close on November 23. After this, a summit group will come up with recommendations, and present those on December 12th from 6pm to 8pm. After that, next steps will be considered. The website for this effort is <http://www.seattle.gov/roadsafety/default.htm>.

Rebecca presented a variety of collisions data, and Charlie Bookman clarified that the data is based on police reports. Fire Department data is not included.

The Road Safety Summit is seeking comments on three basic questions. The FAB discussed each question in turn.

1. What do you think are the highest priority safety problems to solve on Seattle roads?

Comments from the Board included:

- Make the roads predictable. Unpredictable actions from pedestrians and bicyclists cause accidents. They demand the right-of-way when it

can't/shouldn't be given. For example, bicyclists should not pass on the right.

- Pedestrians should not start to cross in a crosswalk after the light blinks "Don't walk." This backs up traffic.
- All-way crosswalks are great.
- Complete streets are good, but this ordinance doesn't fully consider the limitations of certain modes.

2. What do you think are the most important things to do to make Seattle roads safer?

Comments from the Board included:

- Enforcement and education.
- Have a bicycle safety course about bicycling around large vehicles.
- Require licensing for bicyclists that includes a safety course. Currently, where do bicyclists learn the rules of the road? A: Several different places.
- Enforce the law for pedestrians and bicyclists.
- Separate the modes of travel when needed. For example, the City pulled the bollards out for the end of the Ship Canal trail (across from Emerson). You need signage to warn people that you're entering a big intersection.
- Condition of the road surface is important for bicyclists.
- Ticket drunk drivers in Ballard.
- Minimize the conflicts between modes on major freight routes.

3. We often talk about what government can do to promote safety. What are the ways that non-governmental groups and individuals can promote safety?

Comments from the Board included:

- Non-governmental groups can sponsor safety classes.
- Kids can learn bicycling rules in schools.

8. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 11:30 am.

There is no December 2011 meeting. The next meeting is scheduled for January 17, 2012, 9:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m., Seattle City Hall Boards and Commissions Room L280.